



HEADQUARTERS 15TH AIR BASE WING (PACAF)
HICKAM AIR FORCE BASE HAWAII 96853-5000

8 May 1991

Mrs. Alton M. Eakin
4133 Rendale Drive
Jacksonville FL 32210

Dear Mrs. Eakin

In response to your letter of 1 May 1991, I'm happy to provide the enclosed copy of Hickam: The First Fifty Years.

Many thanks for sending me a copy of Mr. Michael J. Gannam's letter about his brother George's background and his duty assignment in Hawaii. For your information, George was actually assigned to Wheeler Field rather than Schofield Barracks, which is an Army installation located adjacent to Wheeler. As a matter of fact, Wheeler was originally a part of Schofield but became a separate and independent military post in August 1939. Also, according to a Hawaiian Air Force Report of Casualties dated 16 December 1941, SSgt George K. Gannam was assigned to the 17th Air Base Squadron at Wheeler Field rather than the 18th Pursuit Group. (Perhaps he was initially with the 18th when he came to Hawaii then was subsequently reassigned to the 17 ABS.)

Mr. Gannam's letter was of particular interest to us in explaining why George was at Hickam on 7 December 1941 rather than at Wheeler. We have been compiling a comprehensive "Army, Army Air Forces, and Civilian Casualty List" to be included as an appendix to a book I am writing with Mr. John Kuborn, Deputy Command Historian for the Pacific Air Forces. We have George listed under the 17th Air Base Squadron at Wheeler but annotated with "(KIA at Hickam Field)". Until now, we had no idea why he was killed at Hickam. Our book will be entitled 7 December 1941: The Air Force Story and should be out by November this year. I'll make a note to send copies to you and Mr. Gannam since the name of your cousin (and his brother) is on the casualty list.

Because George died at Hickam, his name will also appear on a large memorial tablet engraved with the names of all who were killed at Hickam that day. The 11th Bombardment Group Association is footing the cost of this memorial, to be located at the base flagpole. It will be unveiled on Saturday morning, 7 December 1991, at a ceremony commemorating the 50th anniversary of the attack. Thousands of veterans will be coming to Hawaii to participate in the many events planned for the anniversary observance, so it will be a very busy year for many of us over here.

Thank you for your generous offer to make a donation to our "Museum of History." Although we cannot accept cash gifts, we are always grateful for any donations of memorabilia or documents to enhance our historical archives. In this respect, if you could get a transcript of the taped interview that Mr. Michael Gannam refers to in his letter, we would greatly appreciate it.

Sincerely

Leatrice R. Arakaki

LEATRICE R. ARAKAKI
Historian

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Hickam: The First Fifty Years